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## THE PLAYGROUND SURVEY

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Before a doctor can treat his patient he must diagnose the case. Before a tailor can make a suit of clothes, he must measure his customer. It seems reasonably evident likewise that, if a play system is to be made to fit the actual needs of a city, it must be built upon a study of the city's needs. A system that is less than this cannot be better than a custom-made suit at best, and is often no more appropriate than the dress of a five-year-old girl would be for a boy of twelve.

If a tailor is to make a suit of clothes there are certain definite measurements which he takes, because he has found these dimensions are essential in order that he may produce a fit. In recreation surveys, no such definite and fixed measurements have yet been reached. Different authorities will not agree entirely as to what it is desirable to know about a city before the playground system is cut out. Different people also differ very much in their ideas as to how much time it is worth while to spend on making such a survey, and some are of the opinion that they already know all that is necessary about the city in order to plan for its recreation. But it would certainly be a moderate statement to say that the tailor could cut out a suit of clothes quite as well by looking at his customer, as to say that any man, however familiar, could plan an appropriate play system for any city, without first making a study of the conditions that the playgrounds must satisfy.

### THE SURVEY A NEW BUSINESS AND SOCIAL METHOD

Ever since the Pittsburgh Survey was made by the Russell Sage Foundation, it has been the accepted doctrine that every large undertaking should be preceded by a careful study of the conditions. There is now a Bureau of Surveys under the Russell Sage Foundation that will undertake any sort of a social investigation in any

city. The Men-in-Religion Movement instituted a survey, very superficial to be sure, as the base of its campaign in each city. The various vice commissions in the different cities nearly always base their recommendations on a rather careful study of their problem. Since the study of Gulick and Ayers in New York, the educational survey has been the proper thing. The Y.M.C.A. is conducting a rural survey in most cases before the location of its county secretaries. The agricultural colleges are attempting to carry on agricultural surveys in all the states, and, in general, the survey may be said to be the orthodox beginning of any well-considered project. Stated in its simplest terms, it is an attempt to find out what the problem is before its solution is undertaken. As such it is a requirement of the commonest of common sense. The first recreation survey made in this country was, I believe, made by me in Washington, for the Playground and Recreation Association of America, but since that time such surveys have been undertaken in a number of cities. The play movement is usually begun by private individuals with a very limited amount of money to spend. They do not expect to carry through the enterprise, but to start it, and then turn it over to the city. Under the circumstances, local associations usually do not feel that they can spend much time or money on a preliminary survey.

#### WHAT THE SURVEY SHOULD DISCOVER

There are at least four things that every careful playground survey should seek to discover. They are the number and ages of the children, the present activities of the children in their leisure time, and the effects of these activities as shown in their physical and social development, the present play facilities, and the possible sites that might be secured in acquiring a system of recreation grounds. In securing the numbers and ages of the children, the school registration, or, better, the school census, serves as a fairly satisfactory guide. The present activities of the children and young people will have to be a matter of personal study, and for the effects of these conditions, physical tests and the records of the juvenile court may be taken. The present recreation facilities and the facilities that might be secured will have to be a matter

for personal study. Different people would be likely to disagree as to just how far it is desirable to go in the investigation of the details of each of these items, but there would be little disagreement that the survey should include them at least.

#### THE AGES OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Before a play system can be wisely planned, it is necessary to know not only how many children it is to accommodate, but also what the approximate ages of these children are; as entirely different facilities will need to be provided for the young men and women from those furnished to the small children, and the working boys and girls will have to be provided for at night. As has been said, the school census, which records every person in the city under twenty-one, serves as a fairly good guide, both to the number of children in any section and to their ages.

It may be supposed that the proportion of children to adults is pretty much the same in the different parts of the city, and that the most crowded part of the city is the place where the playgrounds are most needed, but this is frequently found not to be the case. The younger families with the smaller children tend to gravitate toward the outer edge of the city where rents are cheaper and there is more room for the little people. The old and wealthy parts of cities will often be found to contain surprisingly few children. Permanent colonies of foreigners will often be found to have a high percentage of children, while a transient colony of those who come and go will be found to contain very few. Also the proportion of those over thirteen differs greatly in different communities.

#### HOW THE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE SPENDING THEIR LEISURE TIME

Having found out the numbers and ages of the young people, the next subject of inquiry should naturally be how they are spending their leisure time. The problem naturally divides itself into three parts. What are the little children doing that have not yet entered school? What are the school children doing after school and on Saturdays and Sundays, and what are the working boys and girls doing in their leisure? Here the problem is largely one of recreation

in the evenings or Sundays. There are no records that will help much in securing this information, yet the method is very simple and interesting: the investigator need only go about the city where the children are found and put down on a pad of paper what each child is doing. The activities of children are easily classified, for the most part, and the records are easily made. The results are almost sure to be interesting. There is no phase of the work which more strikingly illustrates the need of the survey than the opinion of adults in this regard. The people who object to supporting the playgrounds usually call themselves practical people, but it is wonderful how unpractical and almost feeble-minded their suggestions look when confronted with the actual facts. In a town of Northern Illinois, a number of people said that they did not believe in furnishing playgrounds for the children because the children ought to work. In a number of trips over the city, I was not able to find a single child that was working outside of a very few boys who were carrying papers. It was evidently not a case of play or work, but a question of play or idleness. Again a number said, "Playgrounds are not needed in this city; the children can play in ——— Pasture." Observation showed a large pasture well within the city. It had a high barbed-wire fence around it, and never at any time did I find a single child there. People are very blind to things in which they are not especially interested.

In the city of Houston, Texas, there were a number of people who felt that playgrounds were not needed, because "there were plenty of places where the children could play." In two trips about the city in the time after school, in the observation of 123 children, the first night I found 3 were riding bicycles, 5 were running errands, 4 were chasing each other, 70 were loitering up and down the street, and 40 were loafing or playing listlessly in front of their houses. A second evening, I was able to locate 229 children; of these, 1 was studying, 5 were reading, 2 were looking at pictures, 2 were caring for babies, 4 were going errands, 7 were carrying papers, 1 was watering the lawn, 2 were swinging, 3 were playing with pet rabbits, 5 were playing at keeping house, 2 were roller-skating, 9 were bicycling, 4 were playing catch, 46 were playing ball (as a

result of organized contests going on in a near-by school-yard), 40 were strolling on the street, and 90 were loafing. Thus 131 out of the 229 were doing nothing of advantage to anyone, and the baseball, which was found only in this section, was apparently directly due to a series of school contests which were going on in a neighboring school-yard every evening.

#### THE NEED OF THE EVENING PLAYGROUND

Should playgrounds be lighted for use at night? There are three kinds of information that are of prime importance to the solution of this problem. What proportion of the young people are working during the day, so that they cannot use the playground then? Is the ground shaded enough and cool enough so that the children will enjoy using it by day, and what are the children at present doing in the evenings? Here the question comes largely to a study of the poolrooms, dance halls, moving-picture shows, pleasure parks, ice-cream counters, saloons, etc. What is likely to be the result?

#### THE NEED OF THE SUNDAY PLAYGROUND

One of the acute questions of the play world is whether or not the playground is to be open on Sunday. The information that is needed is, first, the nature of the community in which it is placed. If it is in the midst of a colony of orthodox Jews or Seventh Day Adventists, Sunday will be the day when the community itself will most desire the playground to be open. In a number of communities, where the inhabitants are largely recent immigrants from the Continent of Europe, the same will be true. Nearly all the great athletic events and play festivals in Germany take place on Sunday afternoon. On the other hand, if the playground is in the midst of an orthodox Protestant community, it would probably be very unwise to open the playgrounds and ball field on Sunday forenoon at least. But after all, the real conclusive answer to the social desirability of having the playgrounds and ball fields open on Sunday is what the young people are doing on Sunday under present conditions. What do the police records for Monday morning show? Where are the young people, and what are they doing?

## WHAT ARE THE YOUNG PEOPLE DOING IN THE SUMMER VACATIONS?

It would be very interesting to know, if possible, how many parents take their children out of the city for a longer or shorter period during the summer and why they do it. Every such trip takes out of the city much money, and often spends the savings of a year. It is desirable that children should know the country and spend a good deal of time there. But conditions are seldom wholesome for them around summer resorts. It is surely bad business policy for a city to drive its people to the resorts for their recreation, because it has failed to make proper provision for it. I am confident that more money goes out of most cities for this reason every summer than it would cost to maintain a whole system of recreation grounds. These figures are not easy to secure, but in any typical school it is not hard to find how many weeks were spent out of the city in the aggregate and the total for the city can be estimated from this. If these weeks of absence from the city are estimated to mean, in railroad fares, board, and amusements, \$5 a week, which is surely a very moderate estimate, the amount of money thus taken out of the city will be found to reach an enormous total.

## RESULTS OF THE LACK OF PROPER PLAY FACILITIES

We have, at the present time, no satisfactory measure or statement of the results of inadequate play facilities upon children. There have been no studies that much more than hint at what the results may be. It is probably the lack of these statistics that has made the play movement go more slowly than many other social movements have done. The results must be recorded on the physical, intellectual, and social side. The only study that has thus far yielded much that is definite was the study in Chicago, which seemed to show a decrease of nearly 50 per cent in juvenile delinquency. It is not at all impossible, although it would take time and money, to get a measure of the physical results of these conditions upon children.

The year following the introduction of organized play into the curriculum of the schools of Prosheim, Germany, the number of days' absence on account of sickness was reduced nearly one-half.

Our school hygiene departments ought to be required to show for every city the percentage of absences due to sickness. This is, of course, a direct measure of the things that they are supposed to promote, and is the only way of estimating the need of and the efficiency of the department. These facts would be also the facts which would be most useful to the play promoters.

There can be no question but that the development of motor skill and grace comes largely through play. It is doubtful if one ever gets the buoyant, elastic step and sprightly carriage by any other means. The peasant peoples of Europe, whose physical development has come mostly from work or formal gymnastics, have often seemed like awkwardness personified. But neither awkwardness, grace, nor motor skill are easily measured, and it is well-nigh impossible to secure statistics of grace.

On the side of physical development, it should not be so difficult, as we have three methods of measurement. The one is by direct anthropometric and dynamometer test of physical developments and strength, a second by the test of the Public School Athletic League, and the third by pedometer records of activity. We are getting a series of anthropometric records from a number of cities now, and we already have standards fairly well worked out for height and weight for the different ages and races. It seems to be fairly well determined that exercise and food are the two external factors which condition growth. So far as I know, we have no careful and full dynamometer records of the strength of school children. These would take a considerable time to secure, but would be very valuable, as they would give a direct measure of the effects of the child's daily life in terms of strength. The test of the Public School Athletic League is more easily tried and is an advantage in itself. The standard test, as originally promoted in New York, was for boys under thirteen to jump 5 feet, 9 inches standing, chin a bar four times, and run a 60-yard dash in 8½ seconds. At the time I went to Washington to have charge of the playgrounds there, we tried the test in all the playgrounds, and did not find a boy who could do the three things. After four summers of organized play, we tried the test again. There were five hundred boys who could do the three things. There were more than two thousand



boys who could do one or two of the three things. Doubtless the same progressive development has taken place in a number of other cities. Of those passing a creditable physical examination on entrance to the German army, the numbers were found to vary in the different cities from 28 per cent in Berlin to 65 per cent in Mulheim. This was in almost direct ratio to the play facilities that were available in the different cities.

Probably the most valuable test that could be secured, however, would be a pedometer record of activity. I am myself convinced that in closely built up cities that make no provision for play, the average activity of the children is two or three miles a day less than it is in the cities that make ample provision. This opinion is based on a brief pedometer study of activity of school children which I made in Worcester several years ago, and on my observation of the activity of children in all parts of the country. It was my observation of the listlessness of the play in Washington that led us to start a series of contests and try to make them exciting. I am convinced that the daily activity of the children during the warmer months in the South is two or three miles a day less than it is in the North. The chances are, I suspect, that when the nervous system has become habituated in childhood to the daily development of a certain amount of energy, mainly through the nature of the play engaged in, it will be difficult for it greatly to increase this rate later in life. In other words, this would mean, in general, that if the child did not have an opportunity for energetic play, his later life would not be as energetic as it might otherwise have been. This is, of course, the same principle of development through training that lies at the basis of all education. Joseph Lee has said the same thing in another form when he said, "The child without the playground is father to the man without a job." If pedometer records should show that the average activity of the children of one city is nine miles a day and that the average activity of the children of a second city is only six miles a day, I think we may safely infer that the children of the second city will show only a little more than two-thirds of the physical development of the children of the first city, that they will not be as graceful or have as good a carriage, that they probably will not be quite as tall or heavy, and that the

number of absences from school, on account of sickness, other things being equal, will be considerably greater. I believe also that when the boys and girls of the second city grow up they will not be as energetic as the children of the first city. No body of citizens would be willing to have it said that all of these things were happening in their city because they had failed to make provision for the proper play of the children. Hence I am inclined to think that if this data could be secured from enough cities to fix a standard, it would solve the question of play propaganda.

#### THE STUDY OF THE EXISTING PLAY FACILITIES

The problem of any city is naturally divided into three parts, corresponding to the ages of the young people. These three parts are: play for the little children who have not yet entered school, play for the school children, and play for adolescents. The three corresponding types of playgrounds are: the door-yard, the school ground, and the park, athletic field, and municipal playground by day and the social center and municipal gymnasium at night for the adolescents. A study which will determine the actual need must study the yards of the houses and their size and condition, the size and condition and use of the school-yards, and the presence of athletic fields, swimming-pools, etc., in the parks, social centers, in the schools, etc.

#### SIZE AND CONDITION OF THE DOOR-YARDS

Parents will often say in the beginning that they do not believe in the playgrounds as the children ought to play at home. However, it will be found, in most cases, that there has been no provision made for the children's play at home, and that the front yard is inhabited by flower beds and the back yard by ash cans. Probably not more than 1 per cent of city door-yards contain any considerable equipment for the play of the children. It will often be found that a lot two hundred feet deep will not bring any more than a lot one hundred feet deep, showing how little value parents put on play opportunities. Many city blocks are so small that when a good-sized house is put back a reasonable distance from the street there is almost no space in the rear for play. Where the blocks are only

an acre and a half to two acres in size, it may be taken for granted that there can be almost no play in the door-yards, unless the lots are very wide or all the residents will turn their back space into a common for the children. It will be found, in general, that almost no children are playing in the yards of the houses where the blocks are so small. On the other hand, where the blocks are three or more acres in size and are kept in reasonably good condition, these yards often offer an excellent place for the play of the little children who have not yet started to school. The children who are under six have all their time for play. Their health is largely dependent on their being much in the open air. They cannot go to a distance by themselves for their play. Every yard should provide them with the necessary equipment. This should consist, first of all, of a sand bin five or six feet square, a small slide, one or two low swings, not more than eight or ten feet high, and a garden swing.

The yard should provide quoits, croquet, and tether-ball for the older children, if it is of good size, but it can hardly provide any other games for them.

If the yards of the houses then are adequate, it will mean two things of importance for the play system of the city. It will mean that the city in that section is scattered and that consequently there will not be a large child population per acre. It will mean also that little if any provision needs to be made for the children of less than six years of age.

The survey should indicate the approximate size of the blocks, the width of the parking line in front, and the size and condition of the back yard; also whether or not there is any equipment for the play of the children there, although, in general, it can be taken for granted that there is none. The back yard is the proper place for the sand bin, the slide, the see-saw, and the swing, but if the parents will not provide these for the little children, it is probably best for the community to furnish them in the playground. It must be remembered that the door-yard in general can provide for the play of the little children only, and effects the problem of play for the children of school age very little. There can never be vigorous games, such as the older children should play, in the door-yard. Doubtless this survey of the door-yards seems formidable as it is

written down, but in actual fact a mere stroll through the neighborhood with eyes open and pencil in hand will reveal most that needs to be known.

#### THE SIZE AND CONDITION OF THE SCHOOL GROUNDS

In some cities the schools themselves furnish fairly adequate space for the play of all the school children, but, in not a few cases, this space is entirely unutilized. No new playground should ever be purchased until it has been determined that there is no city-owned property that is already available, and the school-yards should naturally be investigated first. Where the school-yards are an acre or more in extent, it would be folly to proceed to the purchase of other small grounds about the city for the play of the school children. It is a good thing, wherever possible, to get a mechanical drawing of every school-yard in the city. This can often be done by the upper classes as a lesson in mechanical drawing. It will be as valuable a lesson as they could possibly have, as it will deal with actual conditions, and will appeal to the children as useful. The drawings should indicate directions, distances, the size of areas, presence of trees or shade, nature of surface, presence of fences, and the like, also the condition of the yard and whether or not there is any play apparatus in it, the number of children in the school, and the number of square feet of playground for every child. I secured such a set of drawings of the Washington school-yards when I first went there. We used them constantly, and the Superintendent sometimes sent down to borrow them. These figures show at once whether any further play facilities are needed in that section. By adding all these areas and registrations together, it is possible to find the average number of square feet per pupil furnished by the school-yards of the city, though here it is necessary to avoid the vitiation of the results from adding in large outlying tracts in connection with new schools with small registration. In some cities such a study will show such a gross deficiency that it will be good campaign material for immediate enlargement of the school-yards or the provision of other playgrounds. In general it may be said that every school should have at least one block of ground, if the blocks are less than four acres in size. There should be not less

than one hundred square feet of playground for each child connected with the school. Anything less than this is inadequate; but there are many places where it is impossible to obtain this much ground on account of the location of the building.

Wherever the school grounds are reasonably adequate, the play of the school children belongs there, and the plan need make very slender provision for their play outside, except that it must furnish a place for swimming, wading, baseball, and tennis for the older children.

If, for any reason, it is impossible to get the mechanical drawing of the school-yards, the estimate of the superintendent of schools may be taken as to the size and suitability of the yard for play, and the registration of the school may be put in by the school clerk.

The condition of the school grounds is of importance as a large part of these throughout the country will be found to be in wretched condition. Often they have never even been leveled off after the cellar was dug, but the soil has been left in heaps. Ashes will often be found to be strewn about the yard as well as brick bats, stones, paper, etc. The ground is frequently gullied out by the rains and obstructed by the projecting roots of trees. If all the schools of the country should be dismissed early this afternoon, and the older boys set with hoes, rakes, and shovels to putting the ground into condition, probably 25 per cent of them would be improved 100 per cent thereby.

#### VACANT LOTS

To most people who have not thought much about it, a playground is a place to play, and there is no problem if there are vacant lots available. These people have almost completely misunderstood the play movement and its meaning, for it has not grown out of the congestion of our cities but out of the new psychology. It makes no difference from which angle you turn the search-light upon the child, you will find that play is the most fundamental thing about him. The vacant lot makes almost no difference in the need of playgrounds, but it makes a very great difference in the possibility of securing them. In the first place, the vacant lot does not belong to the city, and the child is generally a trespasser and often a nuisance there. These vacant lots will soon be built up in

any growing city, if they are not speedily purchased by the city. In my study of available sites in Washington in 1908 I found 113 sites large enough for playgrounds. Sixteen of these were built up the next year, showing that six more years at the same rate would put an adequate playground system almost beyond the reach of the district. The vacant lot is little attended by the small children or by the girls who need the play facilities more than the boys do, because they have less already and receive less encouragement from their parents and the community. If anyone will keep track of the attendance on any particular vacant lot he may choose, I think he will find that it will average less than 1 per cent of the school registration from the neighborhood. Such a ground is often used by the big boys as a place in which to play baseball in the spring and football in the fall, but it will be found in most sections that a large proportion of the games break up in some quarrel or dispute. It will be found also that a great deal of the language would not be allowed to go through the mails. The presence of such vacant lots in the neighborhood makes scarcely any difference in the attendance at the playgrounds.

#### CONDITION OF THE STREETS

Most people imagine that if the playgrounds are provided it is going to keep the children off the streets, and in fact it does to a large extent. All of the children who are on the playground are obviously off the streets, and most of them would probably have been there if the playground had not been provided. But the street is so much more accessible than the playground that the children will probably always play in front of their homes on the street, if the street is suitable, more than they do in the playground. There is nothing inherently demoralizing in street play in a good section of the city. It is the play in the alleys and stables and lumber yards that is apt to be harmful. If a street is little traveled, fairly wide, asphalted, and reasonably well shaded and cleaned, it serves for much play, and the playgrounds for such a section do not need to be as large as they do in a section where the street is paved with cobblestones, unshaded, and left in a filthy condition, or as they would if the street were much frequented by automobiles, so that it would be unsafe for the children to play upon it.

## PARKS AND THEIR FACILITIES FOR BASEBALL AND TENNIS

One objection that was usually made by some member of Congress to the playground appropriation for the District was that there were so many parks in the District that the playgrounds were not needed, but anyone who knows anything about the small circles and triangles of Washington must know that while they may answer more or less for romping or horse play, they are not adapted to games and that no organized play can be carried on there. The same things can be said of any of the small ornamental parks of our cities. In the larger parks there generally are facilities for sports and games, and if there are adequate baseball diamonds, tennis courts, and swimming places, these with ample school-yards may provide for all the play needs of the city. It should be the policy to locate tennis grounds, ball fields, and swimming places within about a mile of each section if possible, and in general these should be along car lines, as the older young people use these facilities and can often afford to pay car fare. All of these available sites should be summed up and listed before new facilities are purchased by the city.

## SWIMMING FACILITIES

All available natural facilities for swimming should also be listed, and, if possible, the statistics of drowning from swimming in these places should be secured.

When all of this data have been obtained, it should be possible to tell the need of the playgrounds and approximately where they should be located and what facilities they should contain. If the yards are large, there will need to be little provision for the small children, and the playgrounds will not need to be so large because there will be fewer children within a given radius. If the school playgrounds are large, there will not need to be much provision for the ordinary play of the school children, and the problem will mainly be to reach the working boys and girls and the young men and women, who still have a love of games, but there will have to be provision also for tennis, baseball, and swimming for the older school children, unless the school also has space for these games. If the streets are asphalted and well paved, the children will have much of their play there, and the playgrounds need not be as large

as would be necessary in a section where the streets are paved with cobblestones.

#### DANCE HALLS, POOLROOMS, AND SALOONS

These have no direct relationship to the playground, but the playground will be a new and effective rival of all of these institutions, especially if it is open at night and really suitable to the social enjoyment of the young men and women.

If a city shows a surplus of such institutions—and a very few may well be a surplus—this may be the best possible reason for opening public gymnasias, reading-rooms, swimming-pools, and public dances in order to draw the young people away from these other institutions. It is certainly an abundant reason for asking that all the play facilities of the city should be open at night as well as by day.

#### THE LOCATION OF POSSIBLE PLAYGROUND SITES

All the studies that have been made of playground attendance indicate that the maximum range of playground effectiveness is not more than one-half mile, but that the younger children do not go regularly much over a quarter of a mile. This would indicate that there should be at least as many playgrounds as the city has square miles of territory. This does not imply, however, that so many playgrounds need to be purchased unless the schools are practically without playgrounds. Where the schools have grounds that are large enough to use, these should always be taken into consideration, and, it may be that all the outside playgrounds that will be needed will be ones which have a range of a mile—which is fairly true of baseball fields, tennis courts, and swimming-pools. This would be one of these for each four square miles of the city's surface, but the location of car lines should always be considered in selecting these sites. It is generally wiser to enlarge the existing school grounds whenever this can be done at a reasonable price, than it is to purchase separate grounds.

In the actual selection of sites, the first thing to determine is the availability of present property belonging to the city. It is seldom possible to take a present park for play purposes, because the people who live around it object, and because there are none too many



parks in our cities as they are. There is, however, in most cities some public property that has been forgotten, and in some cities there is much such property. This property is difficult to find, because it is seldom listed in any one place. It may be land that was purchased earlier for stables, water works, schools, hospitals, or other purposes, or it may be land that has reverted to the city for the non-payment of taxes or for other reasons. The tax-exemption sheets were the only ones that showed us the public and semi-public property that might possibly be used in Washington.

#### CEMETERIES

It is well to look into the cemeteries. In the older cities there are often a number of cemeteries that have been abandoned for burial places and frequently all the bodies have been removed. We found in Washington that thirteen cemeteries had been abandoned within the district during the last thirty years. These sites are taken sooner or later for business purposes in most cases. Nearly all the cemeteries that are well within the city are doomed as such. London has secured more than sixty of these for playgrounds during the last forty years, and it is said that there are five hundred others that will soon be taken for this purpose. The cemetery sites, in general, will have to be purchased, but they can usually be had much cheaper than any other similar piece of property. It would be difficult to say how many of these have been secured in American cities during the last decade, but it is certainly a large number. One is reminded of the request of Mayor Johnson, of Cleveland, that they should bury him where the children might play over his grave.

There are many who would doubtless think of this as a desecration. But we feel very differently about this now from what we did a few years ago. Almost any millionaire would be ashamed to invest any considerable proportion of his fortune in a mausoleum, and more and more our wealthy men are erecting tombstones in the shape of public libraries, fountains, and similar public gifts. From the nature of the case it is not less fitting that children should play over the graves of the dead than that flowers should grow there, and it must be remembered that in any case the graves have

generally been vacated, the tombstones destroyed, and all traces that might serve to identify the graves removed. It will be found also that these neglected graveyards soon become a tangle of luxuriant vegetation, which is likely to become the worst sort of resort for drinking and vice, so that they are often the chief "hang-outs" of gangs of tramps and loafers, and the place of seclusion sought by immoral boys and girls. A careful study will also generally find a constant usurpation, at least in the South, by the surrounding property owners and tenants, so that the size of these neglected cemeteries is likely to grow less from decade to decade.

#### RESERVOIRS

Nearly or quite all reservoirs that are located within the cities must be abandoned or covered in the near future. They are subject to all sorts of defilement within the city, and the land is really too valuable to be devoted to such use. These old reservoirs, with their sloping sides, make a natural athletic field and stadium in many cases. Pittsburgh and Baltimore have each secured one of these abandoned reservoirs for a playground. The city of Reading, Pennsylvania, has covered one of them for a rink for the roller-skaters.

#### PONDS AND MARSHES

The low places around a city can often be filled in so as to remove a nuisance and make a splendid pleasure ground very cheaply. There is an enormous amount of waste material that is being produced by every city every year. In a hundred years, I suppose, the waste of New York City would make solid land of New York harbor, if it were all deposited there. Several years ago sixty-five acres were built on to Rikers Island from ashes alone in a single year. If a city would develop before hand some plan for the depositing of the ashes, dirt from cellars, and streets excavated, cans, bottles, and other solid waste, it could fill in valleys, ponds, and lakes, make embankments, and build mountains at will, though these might be unsightly in the process of formation. A few years ago I climbed a high hill, with a good observatory on top, in the outskirts of Leipzig, which I was informed was built in this way. It was covered with grass and flowers and even some good-sized trees. The

children of many of our prairie cities would appreciate such an artificial slide and playground. Chicago has been very successful in building Grant Park from waste materials, and the new Chicago Plan calls for a whole series of outlying islands and lagoons that are to be largely constructed in this way. Outlying islands protect a harbor from storms and add greatly to its scenic attractiveness. They furnish the most delightful and accessible pleasure grounds that a city can have. Many cities might develop a whole series of islands in this way without its costing the city a cent. Belle Isle Park, Detroit, is an example of how attractive an island might become. A large part of the parks and playgrounds of Boston have been made in this way by filling in the ponds and marshes. The hydraulic dredge works so cheaply now it may often be possible to make a harbor for a city, suppress a mosquito marsh, and make a splendid park and playground at the same time.

#### VACANT PROPERTY

It is well then to put in from the city plat-books or insurance maps all of the sites within the city that are large enough for playgrounds, together with such notes as may be made concerning the condition of the ground.

#### DEMOLISHING SLUM TENEMENTS

It is not strictly necessary that the site selected for a playground should be vacant. Mulberry Bend and Seward Park Playgrounds on the East Side of New York were made by demolishing slums. There is often a section of a city in a most unsanitary and unsavory condition, where existing conditions are a grave menace to the health and morals of the city. Sometimes this property is so cheap, that it will cost little more than if the ground were vacant and it is thus possible to demolish a slum and secure a playground in a congested section at the same time. This will, in nearly every case, cause a great increase in the value of the surrounding property as well.

#### OUTLYING SITES

Everywhere today people are lamenting that the cities have not been planned, and that they have thus grown without leaving sufficient space for public purposes. The condition of the centers

of such cities as New York and Chicago is well-nigh incurable, but it is still possible to plan the suburbs. No new section should be allowed to come into the city without setting aside at least one-tenth of its area for parks and playgrounds, and, in the outer edge of growing cities, it is surely the part of wisdom to secure, as soon as possible, a chain of small parks and playgrounds, encircling the city at intervals of not more than a mile, that can be used as ball fields for the present and developed into playgrounds or restful little parks as the city develops and increasing population demands increasing use.

When all the possibilities have been located, these should be put in on a school or outline map of the city and preferably in different colors, so that one can see at a glance the nature of the areas indicated. After we had prepared such a map in Washington, we found that there were several sites that belonged to the city that we could secure at once without purchase, but our ideas changed completely as to what sites were desirable. We found that some that we had hoped to secure were too near to others that we already had, while other sections were fairly well covered by large school-yards and that still others were in sections where there were few children. The city that goes ahead to spend \$100,000 on playground sites without first making a careful study of needs and resources probably wastes, on an average, about half of the money and has only a hodge-podge at the end, because it failed to spend the preliminary \$500 or \$1,000 that was needed for the survey.

#### WHAT SORT OF SITES SHOULD BE CHOSEN?

Here park boards often make a serious mistake. A piece of hilly and uneven ground may do very well for a park, but play requires ground that is nearly level, and it is likely to cost more to level a plot of uneven ground than it would to purchase a piece of level ground in the first place.

A ravine may be a delightful place for walks and drives and shady benches. It may be a delightful place for children to stroll by themselves or in groups, but it will be almost valueless for an organized playground in all probability. Similarly, if there are no school grounds of importance, it may be worth while to purchase a plot of land not more than an acre in size, but such an area will not

be worth while if the school sites in the neighborhood are of similar size. Where a playground is selected for such a city and mostly for the use of the young people, it should be not less than five acres, and twenty would be a great deal better. Twenty acres is the size that has been taken by the South Park Board for the standard in its future purchases. In a ground of this size there is room for a field house, a swimming-pool, athletic fields, ball fields, tennis courts, etc.

#### WHERE SHOULD A PLAYGROUND BE LOCATED?

It may seem that this topic has already been covered, but it has not in actual fact. Perhaps it may be clearer if we point out some places where playgrounds should not be located. In general they should not be located on the edge of a settled section or on a point of land. If a playground draws from a territory one-half mile in radius, all of which is inhabited, there will naturally be four times as great an attendance at the playground, as there will be if it draws from the quadrant of such a circle only. A playground that has a built up section on one side only will have only half of the attendance of a playground that is in the midst of a well built up section. The playground is essentially a neighborhood affair, and it should be located in the midst of a neighborhood so far as possible.

A playground should not be so located that the children will have to cross the railroad tracks or a boulevard that is much frequented by automobiles, or a street that is congested by traffic. This should be fairly evident, but is often disregarded in the selection of a site.

A playground site should be in the midst of a homogeneous population. Sections of the city often have to be regarded as separate entities, because the people from these different sections live to themselves and do not mingle with the people of adjacent sections. Children will not go from a well-to-do section into a slum to attend a playground, or vice versa. Children often will not go from an Irish section into a Jewish section, and so forth. All of these considerations must be held in mind. In the South the playgrounds for white and colored children have to be absolutely distinct. A white playground on the edge of a colored section will draw only from the white side, and while it may be in the midst of

a densely settled section, so far as attendance is concerned, it is on the edge of the city. There is always a likelihood of race conflicts on these playgrounds that are situated on the edge of a section of the city in this way. Such a playground may be the best way in the world to overcome race antagonism and probably will be in the long run, if the two races are races that might possibly mingle, but it will be sure to reduce the attendance at first.

#### WHAT SORT OF PLAYGROUNDS?

If the door-yards are providing for the play of the little children, then the playgrounds need not make much provision for them. If the school grounds are providing for the school children, then the municipal grounds need only reach the older people. If there are many working boys and girls, then the playground that will be most needed will be the evening playground, which suggests the social center, the public gymnasium, the swimming-pool, the municipal dance hall, and the like, and for the use by day, baseball, tennis, and swimming are almost sure to be the popular things.

#### THE MAKING OF SURVEYS A PROPER FUNCTION OF A PLAYGROUND ASSOCIATION

It will be seen that the making of such a survey as has been indicated, if done thoroughly, will involve a considerable expenditure of time and money. There has been an attempt to indicate a maximum and minimum survey, but nothing should prevent a systematic examination of the size of the school-yards and registration of the schools, the location and extent of existing property belonging to the city, and the making of a map which will show these things as well as all the pieces of property which might be purchased or borrowed for recreation purposes. If half-mile circles are drawn around these proposed sites and the school registrations from within the circle are examined, a good idea of the probable attendance at the playground can be obtained. The making of such a survey is a piece of work that belongs logically to a playground association. Associations cannot hope to maintain a playground system. All that can well be expected of them is to demonstrate the need and help the city to begin right. This means, for the most part, a survey of actual conditions.